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Gallery and Studio

THE AMERICAN ART CLUB AT MUNICH.



THE present generation of American art students looks to Paris and Munich, as the past has principally done to Düsseldorf, for its training, and these two art centres are likely to retain their pre-eminence for a long time to come. Students from the United States, at least, will continue to seek instruction in the schools and ateliers of European masters as long as these remain open to them, notwithstanding the fact that the opportunities offered at home for instruction in the preparatory studies of the arts of painting and sculpture are fully equal to any offered in either Paris or Munich; the only but all-important difference being the cost of such instruction. In Munich the fees for tuition and admission to the Academy are so small that they are not taken into consideration at all; besides, living in Munich is pleasant and inexpensive, an allowance of from thirty-five to fifty dollars per month covering all expenses,

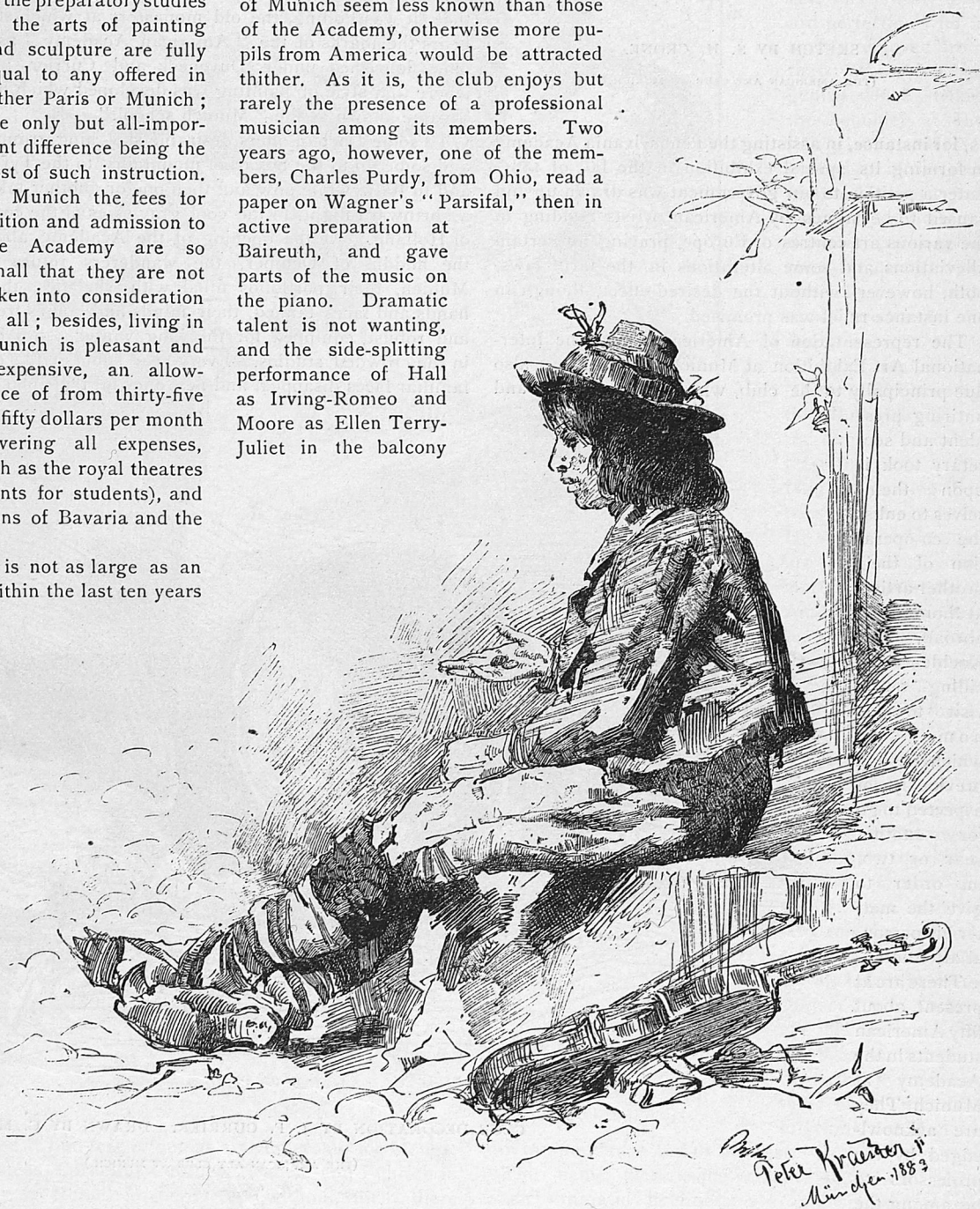
even enabling one to enjoy many of the luxuries of life, such as the royal theatres and operas (admission to which is reduced to twenty cents for students), and vacation trips into the surrounding countries, the mountains of Bavaria and the Tyrol, and even to Italy.

Munich has over two hundred thousand inhabitants, but is not as large as an American city with half that number, though its growth within the last ten years is almost marvellous. As the outside appearance of the city has entirely changed—large and magnificent buildings, principally in the German Renaissance style of architecture, springing up everywhere, narrow streets being widened, canals bridged over to form new streets, and adjacent fields being covered with handsome villas—so also have the habits of the people gradually changed, adjusting themselves to the requirements of the times. To a young American student going over to Munich now, this may not appear so; to him everybody and everything may seem old and slow, and a venerable Munich citizen, deploring the introduction of improvements, such as the street cars and the spacious and artistically decorated restaurants and cafés in place of the small and dingy "gemüthliche Kneipe" of by-gone days, would appear a curiosity. The Monachian of to-day, however, is very lively and active compared with him of twenty years ago. He is growing fond of manly sports; rowing and bicycling have become popular, and the old barbarous custom, still practised among students, of cutting up each others' faces in petty quarrels, is gradually but surely falling into disgrace.

The foreign element in Munich is very strong. The University as well as the Academy attracts students from many lands; in the streets, the cafés and restaurants you may hear all languages spoken, and there are clubs of nearly every nation. Few Americans go to Munich for any other purpose but art study; it was natural, therefore, that the club they formed should be an artist's club. It was first organized about eight years ago, and has, owing to its ever-changing membership, passed through various stages of prosperity. As at present composed, it comprises nearly all the American students in the city, and seems at last placed upon a footing which

promises a long career of both pleasant usefulness and useful pleasure. Besides a large collection of etchings and engravings, photographs and original drawings by many of its old members, some of whom have since achieved renown, the club also owns a library, the foundation of which was a present of nearly one hundred works by an American gentleman who had spent some years in Munich. THE ART AMATEUR, L'Art, and some English periodicals are regularly received, besides such occasional publications as friends at home send from time to time, believing them of interest to the "boys" abroad. Weekly meetings and entertainments form a special attraction, and occasional exhibitions of works by members command the attention even of the Academy professors. In the "olden times" of the club the critical remarks by Walter Shirlaw, Chase, and Duveneck at such exhibitions were always eagerly caught up by the younger men, and now Frank Currier is the "old man" whose opinions carry most weight. Himself following a singular course in art (by many falsely termed the "Munich school," simply because a few young Americans have not been able to resist his influence and have sent their productions home, though no Munich artist paints in that style), he has, nevertheless, a ready appreciation for styles different from his own. Passionately fond of music, well read, of strong argumentative powers, always appreciating a good joke, even when aimed at himself, a hard worker in his art, he is "one of the boys" with the youngest, as enthusiastic with the base-ball bat in his hand as with charcoal or brush.

The excellences of the Music School of Munich seem less known than those of the Academy, otherwise more pupils from America would be attracted thither. As it is, the club enjoys but rarely the presence of a professional musician among its members. Two years ago, however, one of the members, Charles Purdy, from Ohio, read a paper on Wagner's "Parsifal," then in active preparation at Baireuth, and gave parts of the music on the piano. Dramatic talent is not wanting, and the side-splitting performance of Hall as Irving-Romeo and Moore as Ellen Terry-Juliet in the balcony



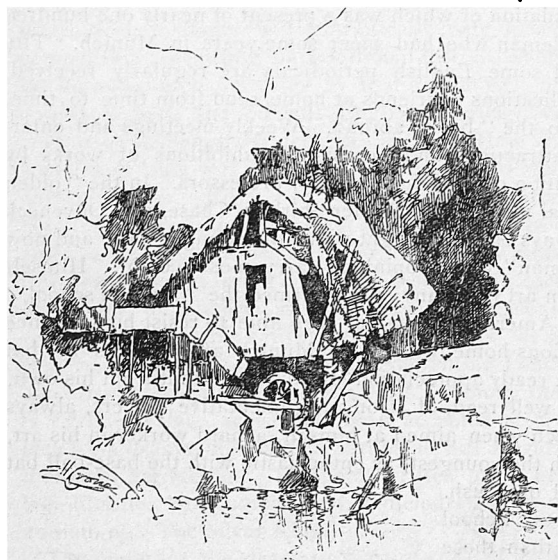
"THE PROFITS OF THE DAY." DRAWN BY PETER KRAEMER FROM HIS PAINTING.

(THE AMERICAN ART CLUB AT MUNICH.)

scene, will long be remembered. The delightful and instructive entertainment of presenting live "old masters" has also been practised, and when it came to that great Carnival enterprise, the "Maskirte Kneipe," inaugurated by the students of the Academy, the Americans competed successfully with all other nations, presenting a true picture of life and habits in the Far West. The pleasant

memories of that festival are forever marred by the cruel fate of nine young German students of the Academy, who were burned to death in their Esquimaux costumes. The fact that no American was injured was at once "cabled" to America at the instance of the club, thereby relieving many an anxious parent's heart at home.

With its existence becoming more generally known, the club received some attentions from afar, and soon had various opportunities of increasing its usefulness,



SKETCH BY S. H. CRONE.

(THE AMERICAN ART CLUB AT MUNICH.)

as, for instance, in assisting the Pennsylvania Academy in forming its special exhibition in the fall of 1881. Later a petition to our government was drawn up and caused to be signed by American artists residing in the various art centres of Europe, praying for certain alleviations and some alterations in the tariff laws, both, however, without the desired effect, though in one instance relief was promised.

The representation of American art at the International Art Exhibition at Munich last year was also due principally to the club, whose ever-watchful and untiring president and secretary took it upon themselves to enlist the co-operation of their brother artists at home and abroad, Mr. Koehler deciding on a visit to his home, to which he had previously not expected to go for another year or two, in order to give the matter his personal attention.

There are at present about fifty American students in the Academy at Munich. They are acknowledged by the professors to be among the most industrious, and at the close of every school year, when medals for the best works are awarded, Americans are always among those carrying off the highest honors. At a recent competition for composition pupils, Carl Marr, from Milwaukee, was awarded the first prize, his only rival being a young Bavarian. In landscape studies strong work has been done by young Eichelberger, and the water-colors by Charles

Mente, with their unmistakable influence of refined Corot and bold Currier, without being imitations of either, give promise of important work to come.

Walter McEwen's rather remarkable performance of leaping from the deep, sombre tones he formerly indulged in to the cool grays of his present palette, promises good results for the future; at present he stands somewhat isolated in Munich, though his endeavors are appreciated by some of the younger Munich artists. Time will show what merit there may be in the painstaking studies of Robert Koehler and Richard Gross, who are at present under the immediate influence of Defregger. The former last year exhibited at the National Academy of Design an interesting picture called "Her Only Support;" it showed a poor woman submitting a broken attachment of her sewing machine to the critical inspection of the village blacksmith.

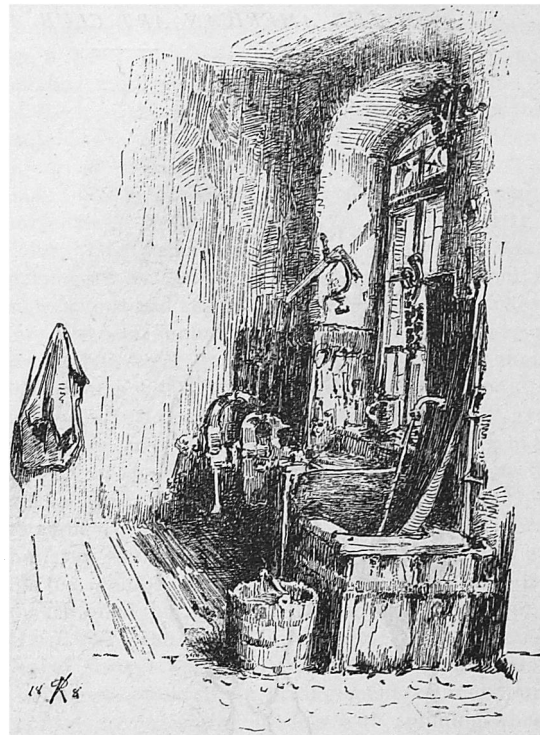
Closely allied in feeling and interest to the Americans are our brethren of English birth. They are in many respects so closely identified that they have really become one colony, dining and wining together on Thanksgiving Day, and indulging in patriotic speeches on the Fourth of July. Other nationalities too are represented among the members of the club, some drawn there for the purpose of practising their English, others by real sympathetic feeling.

No sooner has the year's work closed with the customary exhibition, than the American colony begins to scatter, seeking rest and recreation and new work in the country. Schleissheim has been for two or three years the principal place of attraction, as before that it was Polling, the old monastery at which still bears the marks of the "American Academy," as it once flourished under Duveneck and Currier, and where that style of painting was developed which has become known as the "Munich school."

To some Dachau offers desirable sketching ground, and some go to the Bavarian mountains, to the Tyrol, and to Italy, while now and then one or another takes a northward flight, to the cool gray skies of the coast of Holland. At the opening of the Academy, about the middle of October, the wanderers return to Munich, their portfolios filled with sketches, their hands and faces tanned, their minds and bodies fresh and robust, equipped for the long winter campaign in the crowded studios. Every year some of the old familiar faces disappear and new ones fill their places.

A GERMAN CRITIC ON AMERICAN ART.

EXTENDED notice of the American pictures in the International Art Exhibition at Munich last year has already appeared in these columns. Nevertheless, the following extract from the distinguished Professor Fr. Pecht's review of the exhibition, in the *Allge-*



STUDY BY R. KOEHLER.

(THE AMERICAN ART CLUB AT MUNICH.)

meine Zeitung, will, even at this late date, be found full of interest and valuable suggestion:

I now come to American art—that is so far as we can talk of an American art, and not merely of American painters who have studied in Munich, Paris, Rome, and belong to the schools of those places. That these American artists could send in contributions so respectable in numbers and quality, is, how-

ever, a fact deserving, at all events, of attention, and nothing is more certain than that they will shortly form a very considerable competition to ourselves. That this is not the case yet, is owing only to the circumstance that these American pictures acquaint one with everything under the sun excepting American life itself, the peculiarities of which would, naturally, interest one most. Out of a couple of hundreds of can-



CLUB DECORATION BY J. F. CURRIER. DRAWN BY C. M. MOORE.

(THE AMERICAN ART CLUB AT MUNICH.)

Among the sketches by members of the Club illustrating this notice is one by Toby Rosenthal, which will, I think, revive among old Munich students of the colony pleasant recollections of a well-known model whose features may be recognized in more than one painting of more than one American artist who has since won distinction at home.

MUNICH.

HEPHÆSTUS.

vases collected in these rooms, scarcely a dozen treat subjects taken from the nature or people of the great trans-atlantic republic. Therein this art radically differs from that of all other nations, a fact the more striking as popular life and especially nature in the United States manifestly offer an immense mass of the finest material. Just think of the life of the pioneers in the West; of the gold-diggers, miners,